



Alabama Department of Homeland Security



ALERRT Training

The Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) addresses the need for active shooter response training for first responders.

The ALERRT curriculum, developed after the tragedy at Columbine High School, has become the national standard in active shooter response training.

Secretary Collier, under the direction of Governor Bentley, is working to ensure that all law enforcement in the state of Alabama receive this training. Currently, about 45% have graduated from the course.

If you need more information on how you can sign up for ALERRT, please email Arnaldo “Chico” Mercado at arnaldo.mercado@dhs.alabama.gov or call 334-353-3050.



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Pictured (L to R): Lt. Governor Kay Ivey, Senate Pro Tem Del Marsh, Governor Robert Bentley, and Representative Mike Ball



Governor Bentley signs SB 108

This legislation signed by the Governor will better coordinate state-level law enforcement. The result will be better public safety for the people of Alabama.

Senate Bill 108 accomplishes this by streamlining the administrative-level functions of state law enforcement agencies. Currently, more than 20 state agencies and departments provide law enforcement services. By improving coordination, this bill will help minimize redundancies and allow more resources to be focused on the actual law enforcement services that are delivered to the public.

“We appreciate the service and dedication of all of our state law enforcement officers,” Governor Bentley said. “As we improve coordination between their departments, we’ll be able to better protect our citizens while also saving taxpayers money.”

“When it comes to cutting costs and working toward a more efficient government, no one has been more committed to this effort than Governor Bentley and my colleagues in the Legislature,” said Senate President Pro Tem Del Marsh (R-Anniston), who sponsored this legislation. “After more than two years of work involving countless hours from representatives from the law enforcement community, we have a model that will result in better, more cost-effective services to the people of Alabama.”

“As a retired state trooper, oftentimes my colleagues and I would see ways that our agency and partnering agencies could be run more efficiently and effectively,” said the bill’s House Sponsor, Representative Mike Ball (R-Madison). “After much study and thorough investigation, this legislation will finally streamline Alabama’s law enforcement efforts while conserving taxpayer dollars and maximizing efficiency.”

Senate Bill 108 establishes the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency and a Secretary of Law Enforcement to oversee state-level law enforcement functions. Governor Bentley will appoint the Secretary in the coming months.

Governor Bentley appoints Secretary of Law Enforcement

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Governor Robert Bentley announced the appointment of Homeland Security Director Spencer Collier as Secretary of Law Enforcement.

The newly-created Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency was established by Senate Bill 108, which Governor Bentley recently signed into law as part of a comprehensive effort to make government more efficient. Secretary Collier will continue to serve as the Governor's Homeland Security Director during the Law Enforcement Agency's planning and implementation phase, which will last through January 2015.

"Spencer Collier has been a dedicated public servant for many years. He has served as my Senior Law Enforcement Advisor and worked tirelessly to help create the model that will better coordinate state-level law enforcement," Governor Bentley said. "He has the experience and qualifications necessary to lead this new agency, and his work will benefit people all across the state."

Collier has extensive experience in law enforcement in Alabama, having served as Director of the Department of Homeland Security, a State Trooper in the Alabama Department of Public Safety, and in the Public Safety Department's Special Operations Unit. He has been recognized nationally for expertise in Homeland Security by the Naval Postgraduate Center for Homeland Defense and Security. Collier also served two terms in the Alabama House of Representatives. He received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Troy University and is a graduate of the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center.

"I'm extremely honored that Governor Bentley has selected me for this position," Collier said. "I've spent my professional career working in and around law enforcement, and I'm fully committed to this new challenge. We have already made great strides in increasing efficiency and coordination while eliminating duplications of services. I look forward to ensuring that we provide the best possible public safety for the people of Alabama while being responsible with taxpayer dollars. We have one opportunity to assemble this new agency in the most efficient and productive manner, and I am committed to doing just that."



Governor Bentley reads Spencer Collier the oath of office and formally names him "Secretary of State Law Enforcement." Pictured with Secretary Collier is his wife, Melissa Collier.

Governor Bentley announces the creation of a strategic plan for preventing and responding to active shooter events

The plan was compiled by Secretary of Law Enforcement and Alabama Department of Homeland Security Director Spencer Collier. Collier compiled the plan at the direction of Governor Bentley and delivered the plan to the Governor.

“We have been working for some time on various methods of preventing and responding to active shooters, and this formal plan will help us coordinate those efforts,” Governor Bentley said. “By increasing law enforcement training, educating the public and preparing response plans, we can take steps now that could help save lives in the future.”

“From the perspective of law enforcement, we are not at a point where we can predict active shooter incidents, but we can be as trained and prepared as possible should they occur,” Collier said. “To be able to notify the public regarding how to handle themselves during an active shooter situation will hopefully save lives.”

“While no strategy can completely prevent an active shooter event, certain steps can be taken to decrease a potential shooter’s chances of successfully carrying out his or her plan,” the Active Shooter Response Plan states. “Being prepared is the best defense.”

Three top priorities are outlined in the formal long-range plan. The plan documents the manner in which these priorities will be addressed:

- **Law Enforcement**: Continue and expand training for law enforcement in how to respond to and combat an active shooter event through ALERRT (Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training).

1. The purpose of this federally-approved program is to train law enforcement officers to safely and effectively neutralize an active shooter.
2. ALERRT has been approved for the use of US DHS grant funds, which is a great cost savings to the State of Alabama.

Currently, about 45% of law enforcement officers in the State of Alabama are now formally trained in combating active shooters. The long-range goal of this plan is to help ensure every officer receives this training. Also, there are efforts to make ALERRT training a requirement in the Alabama Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission.

- **General Public**: Engage the private sector in sharing information, and educate the general public on how to respond to an active shooter event.

1. Partnering with federal counterparts, AL DHS is taking part in an active shooter awareness campaign to emphasize the importance of reporting suspicious activity to the proper local law enforcement entities. This can be a key prevention measure.

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2. A hotline is already available to receive anonymous tips on suspicious persons or activity. The state is raising awareness of this hotline. The hotline can be reached at 1-866-229-6220. The hotline connects people with the Alabama Fusion Center, the state's intelligence and information sharing operation.
3. Additionally, AL DHS is currently pursuing the implementation of a suspicious activity reporting "app" for smartphones. This would provide the same reporting capability currently available on the Fusion Center website.
4. A promotional campaign consisting of billboards, digital signage and public service announcements will be used to continue to increase awareness and encourage the public to report any suspicious activity.
5. Use the instructional video "Run, Hide, Fight" to instruct members of the public on how they should respond if they find themselves in the middle of an active shooter situation. DHS instructors will be available to provide additional instruction to those who oversee various public facilities such as offices, government buildings, recreational facilities, etc.

- Education Community: Continue work with the Alabama Department of Education, utilizing the Virtual Alabama system, which makes school safety plans immediately accessible to first responders.

1. Virtual Alabama provides schools and first responders instant access to school safety plans and virtual maps. Crucial information such as evacuation routes, disaster staging areas, surveillance video feeds and more can be accessed by first responders through the Virtual Alabama system.

On March 4 and 5, 2013, Virtual Alabama held its 3rd annual School Safety Summit in Montgomery, AL. Attendance at the event has tripled, going from roughly 200 participants last year to more than 650 participants this year. Governor Bentley and experts in all areas of school safety spoke with educators and first responders on how to improve conditions within schools. Encouraging additional participation in Virtual Alabama will continue.

"We also recognize there is sometimes a mental health aspect to the prevention of certain crimes," Governor Bentley added. "Some criminal conduct can be addressed by identifying problem behaviors at an earlier age and taking appropriate actions. We are currently working with the Alabama Department of Mental Health on additional strategies for prevention."

"By taking a comprehensive approach, we can develop methods that will continue to increase our safety and preparedness," Governor Bentley concluded. "While nothing could ever prevent all crimes, we will do everything we can to increase safety for our citizens and improve response plans in the event of an emergency."

To view the plan in its entirety, please go to <http://www.governor.alabama.gov/downloads/ActiveShooterStrategicResponsePlan.pdf>



Alabama Department of Homeland Security
P.O. Box 304115
Montgomery, Alabama 35130

Phone: 334-353-3050
Fax: 332-353-3072

dhs.alabama.gov

Secretary Collier completes NPS Executive Leaders Program

Secretary Collier completed the Executive Leaders Program at Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security on February 28, 2013.

The goal of the Executive Leaders Program is to enhance senior Leader's capacity to develop policies and strategies while strengthening working relationships across the jurisdictional boundaries of regions, agencies, local-state-tribal-federal governments and the private sector. Students study the interdisciplinary concepts that comprise homeland security.

Collier was chosen because of his extensive experience and recognized leadership in the disciplines that comprise homeland security.

Participants met for four one-week intensive sessions over a nine-month period at the NPS Center for Homeland Defense and Security in Monterey, California. The 28 participants represent a snapshot of homeland security across the country and include professionals from the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security, and agencies within it, as well as emergency management, law enforcement, fire safety, state and municipal governments as well as the private sector.

